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11	Attorneys for Defendant, Counterclaim Plain and Third-Party Plaintiff Dexon Computer, In	tiff nc.
12	UNITED STATES	DISTRICT COURT
13	NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFO	ORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION
14 15 16 17	CISCO SYSTEMS, INC., a Delaware corporation and CISCO TECHNOLOGY, INC., a California corporation,  Plaintiffs,	Case No. 3:20-CV-4926-CRB  DEFENDANT'S ANSWER, AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES, COUNTERCLAIMS AND THIRD-PARTY CLAIMS
18 19	v.  DEXON COMPUTER, INC., a Minnesota corporation,  Defendant.	Hon. Charles R. Breyer Presiding Judge Trial Date: None
20 21 22 23	DEXON COMPUTER, INC., a Minnesota corporation,  Counterclaim Plaintiff and Defendant,	
24	V.	
25 26	CISCO SYSTEMS, INC., a Delaware corporation and CISCO TECHNOLOGY, INC., a California corporation,	
27 28	Counterclaim Defendants and Plaintiffs.	

Case No. 3:20-CV-4926-CRB

1 DEXON COMPUTER, INC., a Minnesota 2 corporation, 3 Third-Party Plaintiff, 4 v. ATLANTIX GLOBAL SYSTEMS 5 INTERNATIONAL, LLC, BIZCOM ELECTRONICS, INC., DIGI DEVICES ONLINE, ENTERPRISE BUSINESS TECHNOLOGIES, INC., FIBER CABLE CONNECTIONS, MJSI, MULTIMODE TECHNOLOGIES, LLC, NETWORK REPUBLIC, OPTIMUM DATA, INC.. PARAGON, PURE FUTURE TECHNOLOGY, INC., SEASTAR IT 10 TRADING LLC, SERVER TECH SUPPLY, SOFTNETWORKS, INC., 11 STRADA NETWORKS, LLC STRATEGIC TELECOM SUPPLY & 12 SOLUTIONS, TEKSAVERS UNLIMITED NETWORK SOLUTIONS, 13 and WISECOM TECHNOLOGIES, 14 Third-Party Defendants.

Defendant Dexon Computer, Inc. ("Dexon"), by and through its undersigned counsel, for its Answer, denies each and every allegation in Plaintiffs Cisco Systems, Inc. and Cisco Technology Inc.'s ("Plaintiffs") First Amended Complaint ("Complaint") except as expressly admitted, qualified or otherwise responded to herein and denies that Plaintiffs are entitled to any of the relief requested in their Prayer for Relief. In response to each of the numbered paragraphs of the Complaint, Dexon states as follows. To the extent the headings or any other non-numbered statements in the Complaint contain allegations, Dexon denies each and every such allegation.

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 1. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 1 of the Complaint.
- 2. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 2 of the Complaint.

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THE PARTIES

- 2 | 3. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 3 of
  3 | the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations.
- 4 | 4. Dexon admits the allegations of paragraph 4 of the Complaint.
  - 5. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 5 of the Complaint.

## **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

- 6. Admits that the Complaint purports to be one "founded upon violations of Federal trademark laws" but denies any such purported claims have legal or factual merit. The remaining allegations in paragraph 6 of the Complaint are legal conclusions and questions of law regarding jurisdiction to which no response is required. To the extent a response is
- 11 required, Dexon denies such allegations.

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- 12  $\parallel$  7. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 7 of the Complaint.
- 13  $\parallel$  8. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 8 of the Complaint.
- 14 | 9. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 9 of the Complaint.
- 15 | 10. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 10 of the Complaint.
- 16 | 11. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 11 of the Complaint.

# **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

# **Alleged Cisco Business and History**

- 19 | 12. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 12
  20 | of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations.
- 21 | 13. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 13
  22 | of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations.
- 14. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 14
  24 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations.

# **Alleged Cisco Trademarks**

15. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 15 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations.

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DEFENDANT'S ANSWER, AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES, COUNTERCLAIMS AND THIRD- PARTY CLAIMS

Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 16 16. 1 2 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 17 3 17. of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. 4 Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 18 5 18. of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. 6 **Alleged Counterfeit "Cisco" Products** 7 19. 8 Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 19 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. 9 Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 20 10 20. of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. 11 12 Alleged Impact on Health, Safety, and National Security Caused by Counterfeit Cisco Products 13 21. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 21 14 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. 15 Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 22 22. 16 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations. 17 Dexon's Alleged History and Practice of Trafficking in Counterfeit Cisco 18 **Products** 19 23. Dexon admits selling product bearing the Cisco name and/or mark, but denies the 20 remaining allegations of paragraph 23 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, any 21 allegation such product was counterfeit. 22 Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 24 of the Complaint. 24. 23 Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 25 of the Complaint. 25. 24 25 26 27

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# Alleged Activity Prior to 2015 Purportedly Demonstrating Dexon's Pattern and Practice of Knowingly Trafficking in Counterfeit Cisco Products

# Alleged July 27, 2006 Sale of Counterfeit Cisco Products to a Cisco Investigator (Reston, Virginia)

26. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 26 of the Complaint. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

# FBI's Seizure of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products from Dexon on February 26, 2008

27. Dexon admits the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") executed a search warrant at Dexon's business location on or about February 26, 2008, but denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 27 of the Complaint including, without limitation, any allegation, suggestion or implication any or "all" of the product taken by the FBI was determined to be counterfeit. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

### Cisco's March 2008 Cease and desist Letter to Dexon and its CEO

28. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 28 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterizations of the letters or communications which speak for themselves. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

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# Dexon's June 2010 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan) and Cisco's C&D Letter

29. Dexon admits selling and shipping Cisco product to Wayne State University on or about February 21, 2010 but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 29 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, any allegation the product involved was counterfeit. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

30. Dexon lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of paragraph 30 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies those allegations, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter which speaks for itself. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

31. Dexon admits it responded via a letter from counsel to Plaintiff's Wayne State University allegations on or about August 23, 2010, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 31 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter which speaks for itself. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

32. Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a follow-up letter concerning or relating to the Wayne State University allegations on or about August 30, 2010, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 32 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter which speaks for itself. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice.

# Dexon's July 2010 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to a Cisco **Investigator** (Los Angeles, California) 33. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 33 of the Complaint. Plaintiffs previously commenced a lawsuit against Dexon in 2011 including claims based directly on such allegations which were resolved via a confidential settlement agreement and dismissed with prejudice. Dexon's Alleged Illegal Conduct Giving Rise to the Present Lawsuit 34. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 34 of the Complaint. Dexon's July 2015 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Product to Things Remembered, Inc. (Highland Heights, Ohio) and Cisco's C&D Letter Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Things Remembered, Inc. on or about July 2015, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 35 of the Complaint, including any allegation the product was counterfeit.

36. Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a letter addressed to Dexon's counsel relating to the Things Remembered, Inc. allegations on or about August 27, 2020 and that Dexon responded thereto, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 36 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterizations of the letters or communications which speak for themselves.

### Dexon's December 2016 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to Jack Henry & Associates, Inc. (Monett, Missouri) and Cisco's C&D Letter

- 37. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Jack Henry & Associates, Inc. ("Jack Henry") on or about December 2016, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 37 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.
- Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a letter addressed to Dexon's counsel relating to the Jack Henry allegations, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 38 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter which speaks for itself.

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**Cisco Investigator (Berkeley, California)** 

Dexon admits it responded to Plaintiffs' Jack Henry allegations via a letter from

Dexon's October 2017 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to a

Dexon's counsel, but denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 39 of the

Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterizations of the

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responsive letter which speaks for itself.

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7	40. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 40 of the Complaint.
8	Dexon's January 2018 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Product to Community Health Alliance (Reno, Nevada) and Cisco's C&D Letter
9	41. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Community Health Alliance ("CHA") on or
10	about January 2018, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 41 of the
11	Complaint, including, without limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.
12	42. Dexon admits Plaintiffs and Dexon's counsel exchanged a series of letters or
13	communications relating to the CHA allegations, but denies the remainder of the allegations
14	in paragraph 42 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted
15	characterizations of the letters or communications which speak for themselves.
16	Dexon's April 2018 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to Tucson
17	Medical Center (Arizona)
18	43. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Tucson Medical Center ("TMC") on or about
19	April 2018, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 43 of the Complaint,
20	including, without limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.
21	Dexon's April 2018 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to DARCARS (Maryland) and Cisco's C&D Letter
22	44. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to DARCARS on or about April 2018, but denies
23	the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 44 of the Complaint, including, without
24	limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.
25	45. Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a letter addressed to Dexon's counsel relating to the
26	DARCARS allegations, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 45 of
27	the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the
28	letter which speaks for itself.
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Dexon's August 2018 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to Lockridge, Grindal, Nauen, PLLP (Minneapolis, Minnesota)

46. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Lockridge, Grindal, Nauen, PLLP on or about August 2018, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 46 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.

Dexon's August 2018 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to Regional Justice Information Service (St. Louis, MO) and Cisco's C&D Letter

- 47. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Regional Justice Information Service ("RJIS") on or about August 2018, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 47 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.
- 48. Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a letter addressed to Dexon's counsel relating to the RJIS allegations, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 48 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter which speaks for itself.

# Dexon's Purchases in 2018 of Alleged Counterfeit Switches from PureFutureTech (Fremont, California)

- 49. Dexon admits purchasing Cisco product from PureFutureTech on or about 2018 and that the purported supplier of such product was HongKong Sellsi, a former authorized licensed seller of Cisco products, but lacks sufficient information to admit or deny the remaining allegations of paragraph 49 of the Complaint, and on that basis Dexon denies such allegations.
- 50. Dexon admits Plaintiffs served it with a subpoena relating to a lawsuit involving Plaintiffs, PureFutureTech and HongKong Sellsi and that Plaintiffs were ultimately required to file a motion relating to such non-party subpoena. Dexon denies the remaining allegations of paragraph 50 of the Complaint, including, without limitation, any allegation, suggestion or implication Dexon "refused to cooperate" with, or in any way failed to meet its obligations arising from, the subpoena.

1 2	Dexon's Purchases in 2017 to 2019 of Alleged Counterfeit Transceivers from Pure Future Tech, Inc. (Fremont, California)	
3	51. Dexon admits purchasing Cisco product from Pure Future Tech, Inc. in the period	
4	2017-2019 but denies any such product was counterfeit. Dexon lacks sufficient information	
5	to admit or deny the remaining allegations in paragraph 51 of the Complaint and on that	
6	basis denies such allegations.	
7	52. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 52 of the Complaint, including, without	
8	limitation, any allegation Dexon knew or reasonably should have known any Cisco product	
9	was allegedly counterfeit, or that Dexon was willfully blind to such alleged fact.	
10 11	Dexon's Sales of Alleged Counterfeit Products to Murray State University (Murray, Kentucky) in 2018 and 2019 and Cisco's C& Letter	
12	53. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Murray State University ("MSU") in or about	
13	2018 and 2019, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 53 of the Complaint,	
14	including, without limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.	
15	54. Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a letter addressed to Dexon's counsel relating to the	
16	MSU allegations, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 54 of the	
17	Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter	
18	which speaks for itself.	
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20	(King of Prussia, Pennsylvania)	
21	55. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to MedRisk on or about July 2019, but denies	
22	the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 55 of the Complaint, including, without	
23	limitation, any allegation the product was counterfeit.	
24	Dexon's September 2019 Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Products to	
25	Coppell Independent School District (Coppell, Texas) and Cisco's C&D Letter	
26	56. Dexon admits selling Cisco product to Coppell Independent School District ("CISD")	
27	on or about September 2019, but denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 56 of	
28	the Complaint.	
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1	57. Dexon denies any allegation, suggestion or implication in paragraph 57 of the	
2	Complaint that Cisco product it sold to CISD was counterfeit. Dexon lacks sufficient	
3	information to admit or deny the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 57 of the	
4	Complaint and on that basis denies such allegations.	
5	58. Dexon admits Plaintiffs sent a letter addressed to Dexon's counsel relating to the	
6	CISD allegations, but Dexon denies the reminder of the allegations in paragraph 58 of the	
7	Complaint, including, without limitation, Plaintiffs' attempted characterization of the letter	
8	which speaks for itself.	
9	Dexon's Alleged California Directed Conduct Identified Through Jurisdictional Discovery	
10	Discovery	
11	59. Dexon admits Plaintiffs conducted jurisdictional discovery herein, but denies the	
12	remainder of the allegations in paragraph 59 of the Complaint, including, without limitation,	
13	Plaintiffs' characterization of such jurisdictional discovery, as well as any allegation such	
14	discovery revealed any "illegal and tortious" conduct by Dexon in California or elsewhere.	
l	Customers	
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16 17 18	Customers	
16 17	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California	
16 17 18 19	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers	
16 17 18 19 20	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers  61. Dexon admits Cisco has transmitted software licenses via Product Activation Key	
16 17 18 19 20 21	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers  61. Dexon admits Cisco has transmitted software licenses via Product Activation Key Certificates ("PAK") and that such PAKs have included a code that allows users to utilize	
16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers  61. Dexon admits Cisco has transmitted software licenses via Product Activation Key Certificates ("PAK") and that such PAKs have included a code that allows users to utilize the subject software. Dexon denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 61 of the	
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers  61. Dexon admits Cisco has transmitted software licenses via Product Activation Key Certificates ("PAK") and that such PAKs have included a code that allows users to utilize the subject software. Dexon denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 61 of the Complaint.	
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers  61. Dexon admits Cisco has transmitted software licenses via Product Activation Key Certificates ("PAK") and that such PAKs have included a code that allows users to utilize the subject software. Dexon denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 61 of the Complaint.  62. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 62 of the Complaint.	
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	Customers  60. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 60 of the Complaint.  Dexon's Sale of Alleged Counterfeit Cisco Licenses to California Customers  61. Dexon admits Cisco has transmitted software licenses via Product Activation Key Certificates ("PAK") and that such PAKs have included a code that allows users to utilize the subject software. Dexon denies the remainder of the allegations in paragraph 61 of the Complaint.  62. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 62 of the Complaint.  63. Dexon denies the allegations in paragraph 63 of the Complaint.	

### FIRST PURPORTED CLAIM FOR RELIEF Federal Trademark Infringement 2 (15 U.S.C. § 1114) 3 65. Dexon restates and incorporates by reference its responses to the allegations in paragraphs 1-64 in response to the allegations in paragraph 65 of the Complaint. 4 5 66. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 66 of the Complaint. 67. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 67 of the Complaint. 6 68. 7 Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 68 of the Complaint. 8 69. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 69 of the Complaint. 9 70. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 70 of the Complaint. 10 71. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 71 of the Complaint. 11 72. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 72 of the Complaint. 12 SECOND PURPORTED CLAIM FOR RELIEF Federal Trademark Counterfeiting 13 (15 U.S.C. § 1114) Dexon restates and incorporates by reference its responses to the allegations in 14 73. 15 paragraphs 1-72 in response to the allegations in paragraph 73 of the Complaint. 74. 16 Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 74 of the Complaint. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 75 of the Complaint. 17 75. 18 76. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 76 of the Complaint. 19 77. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 77 of the Complaint. 20 78. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 78 of the Complaint. 21 79. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 79 of the Complaint. THIRD PURPORTED CLAIM FOR RELIEF 22 **False Designation of Origin** 23 (15 U.S.C. § 1125) Dexon restates and incorporates by reference its responses to the allegations in 24 80. 25 paragraphs 1-79 in response to the allegations in paragraph 80 of the Complaint. 81. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 81 of the Complaint 26

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Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 82 of the Complaint.

Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 83 of the Complaint.

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Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 84 of the Complaint.

Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 85 of the Complaint.

FOURTH PURPORTED CLAIM FOR RELIEF California Unfair Business Practices (Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17200 et seq.)

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5 86. Dexon restates and incorporates by reference its responses to the allegations in paragraphs 1-85 in response to the allegations in paragraph 86 of the Complaint. 6 7 87. The allegations in paragraph 87 of the Complaint are legal conclusions of law 8 regarding California Business and Professions Code §§ 17200 et seg to which no response 9 is required. To the extent such allegations imply or suggest Dexon has in any way violated 10 California Business and Professions Code §§ 17200 et seq Dexon denies such allegations. 88. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 88 of the Complaint. 11 89. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 89 of the Complaint. 12 13 90. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 90 of the Complaint. 14 91. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 91 of the Complaint. 15 92. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 92 of the Complaint. FIFTH PURPORTED CLAIM FOR RELIEF 16 Uniust Enrichment 17 (Common Law) 18 93. Dexon restates and incorporates by reference its responses to the allegations in 19 paragraphs 1-92 in response to the allegations in paragraph 93 of the Complaint. 20 94. Dexon admits the allegations of paragraph 94 of the Complaint. 21 95. Dexon denies the allegations of paragraph 95 of the Complaint. 22 AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES 23 Without admitting any wrongful conduct on the part of Dexon, and without admitting 24 that Plaintiffs claims have any merit or that Plaintiffs have suffered any loss, damage, or 25 injury, Dexon alleges the following affirmative defenses to the Complaint. By designating 26 the following as affirmative defenses, Dexon does not in any way waive or limit any defenses 27 which are or may be raised by their denial, allegations, and averments set forth herein. These 28 defenses are pled in the alternative, are raised to preserve the rights of Dexon to assert such Case No. 3:20-CV-4926-CRB DEFENDANT'S ANSWER, AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES, COUNTERCLAIMS AND THIRD- PARTY CLAIMS

defenses, and are without prejudice to Dexon's ability to raise other and further defenses. Dexon expressly reserves all rights to reevaluate their defenses and/or assert additional defenses upon discovery and review of additional documents and information, upon the development of other pertinent facts, and during pretrial proceedings in this action. Dexon expressly incorporate all allegations of its Answer, Counterclaims and Cross-Claims as if fully set forth in each of the following affirmative defenses.

# FIRST AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Res Judicata and Collateral Estoppel)

Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the doctrines of 96. res judicata and collateral estoppel.

# SECOND AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Laches)

Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the doctrine of 97. laches. Plaintiffs' have had longstanding knowledge concerning the legal open or "secondary" market for its products and have proactively engaged in anticompetitive behavior in an effort to selectively manipulate and control such secondary market to their advantage. Plaintiffs have had longstanding specific knowledge of Dexon's activity in the legal secondary market since well before 2011, yet have failed to take timely action to assert their claims herein, resulting in substantial prejudice to Defendants.

# THIRD AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Estoppel)

98. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the doctrine of estoppel. Plaintiffs' advertises that consumers can purchase their products from their "Authorized Channel Partners" or "Authorized Resellers." Plaintiffs have known, or should have known such "Authorized Channel Partners" and/or "Authorized Resellers" participate in and sell their products on the secondary market. Plaintiffs have allowed these "Authorized Channel Partners" and/or "Authorized Resellers" to maintain their "authorized" status despite knowledge of their participation in the secondary market, including evidence of their

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sale of counterfeit Cisco products. Plaintiffs know, or should have reasonably known, that secondary market resellers such as Dexon rely upon Plaintiffs' endorsement of such "authorized" vendors when sourcing Cisco products, including, without limitation, procuring Cisco product from such "authorized vendors" end customers. Plaintiffs also claim to have developed "tools" capable of detecting counterfeit goods. However, unlike their competitors in the market, have intentionally failed or refused to provide or offer such "tools" to secondary market resellers such as Dexon to aid and assist in their efforts to detect and deter counterfeit goods. Plaintiffs have also actively contributed to the presence of counterfeit product in the marketplace by, without limitation, failing to properly police and control their manufacturers and failing to properly manage their product serial numbers. As one example, Plaintiffs "authorized" vendors intentionally modify or change product serial numbers in order to ensure the subject product(s) qualify for Plaintiffs' SMARTnet service contract. Plaintiffs are therefore estopped from pursuing claims against Dexon or seeking damages related to alleged counterfeit products.

# FOURTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (First Sale Doctrine and Exhaustion)

99. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the first sale doctrine, which protects secondary market resellers such as Dexon from liability for the purchase, importation, and resale of genuine Cisco products and exhausts Plaintiffs' rights in further transactions.

# FIFTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Statutes of Limitations)

100. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by applicable statutes of limitations, including but not limited to CAL. CIV. PROC. CODE §§ 337–38, CAL. BUS. & PROF. CODE § 17208, and 17 U.S.C. § 507. Some or all of Plaintiffs' claims involve conduct outside of the applicable statutes of limitations

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### SIXTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Waiver)

101. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the doctrine of waiver. Plaintiffs have promoted and advertised its "authorized" sellers despite having full knowledge certain such "authorized" sellers: i) have been caught selling counterfeit product; and ii) actively and regularly deal with secondary market resellers such as Dexon. Secondary market resellers such as Dexon have understandably relied upon Plaintiffs' promotion and endorsement of such "authorized" sellers when sourcing Cisco products for their customers. As noted above, Plaintiffs have also intentionally failed or refused to provide or offer their claimed "tools" for detecting counterfeit product to secondary market resellers such as Dexon, and have actively contributed to the presence of counterfeit product in the marketplace by, without limitation, failing to properly police and control their manufacturers and failing to properly manage their product serial numbers. Accordingly, Plaintiffs have waived any claims related to Dexon's unwitting sale of alleged counterfeit goods, including any such goods sourced directly or indirectly from Plaintiffs' "authorized" vendors.

# SEVENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Unjust Enrichment)

102. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the doctrine of unjust enrichment. Plaintiffs have engaged in anticompetitive practices and made misrepresentations to consumers regarding: i) the quality and authenticity of products sold by secondary market resellers such as Dexon; and ii) Plaintiffs' rights to restrict consumers use and transfer of Cisco hardware and software. Such anticompetitive and inequitable conduct has improperly steered customers from Dexon to Plaintiffs and unjustly enriched Plaintiffs.

# EIGHTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Unclean Hands/Inequitable Conduct)

103. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the doctrines of unclean hands, inequitable conduct, and similar defenses. Without limitation, Plaintiffs

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1	have: i) engaged in anticompetitive practices, (ii) intentionally misled consumers into
2	thinking that genuine products on the secondary market are used, counterfeit, or stolen, (iii)
3	sold products to resellers whom it knew, or should have known, were reselling the products
4	on the secondary market, (iv) held out certain entities as "Authorized Resellers" even though
5	Plaintiffs knew or should have known these entities sold counterfeit goods, and engaged in
6	other inequitable practices that bar recovery on its claims.
7	NINTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE
8	(Redundancy)
9	104. Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, because they are
10	redundant and/or duplicative of one another.
11	TENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE (Abandanment)
12	(Abandonment)

Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by abandonment of any marks at issue. Plaintiffs' have failed to properly policy and exercise adequate quality control over its marks and have thereby abandoned their rights therein.

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# **ELEVENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE** (Conduct of Others)

Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, because the conduct complained of is the conduct of others, including, without limitation, Plaintiff's "authorized" vendors and/or Plaintiffs' licensed manufacturers.

# <u>TWELVE AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE</u> (Failure to Mitigate)

Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, because Plaintiffs failed to mitigate, minimize, or attempt to avoid damages. Without limitation, Plaintiffs could have pursued legal remedies earlier, assisted secondary market resellers like Dexon in detecting and fighting counterfeit products, and/or properly policed and prevented the manufacture and distribution of counterfeit product within their own manufacturing and distribution network.

# THIRTEENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSIVE (Lack of Personal Jurisdiction) 1 2 3 108. Plaintiffs are barred from pursuing their claims against Dexon in this Court because the Court lacks personal jurisdiction over Dexon. 4 5 **FOURTEENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSIVE** (Improper Venue) 6 Plaintiffs are barred from pursuing their claims against Dexon in this Court because 7 venue is improper. 8 FIFTEENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSIVE 9 (Failure to State a Claim) 10 11 The Complaint, in whole or in part, fails to state any claim upon which relief can be 12 granted. 13 SIXTEENTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSIVE (One Satisfaction Rule / Bar on Double Recovery) 14 15 Plaintiffs' claims and/or recovery are barred, in whole or in part, by the one satisfaction rule and/or the bar on double recoveries. 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

COUNTERCLAIMS 1 2 Counterclaim Plaintiff Dexon Computer, Inc. asserts the following counterclaims 3 against Counterclaim Defendant Cisco Systems, Inc., and Cisco Technology, Inc. alleges as follows: 4 5 **THE PARTIES** Defendant and Counterclaim Plaintiff Dexon Computer, Inc. ("Dexon") is a 6 Minnesota corporation with its principal place of business at 9201 E. Bloomington 7 Freeway, Suite BB, Bloomington, Minnesota 55420. 8 On information and belief, Plaintiff and Counterclaim Defendant Cisco Systems, 9 Inc. ("CSI") is a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business at 170 W. 10 11 Tasman Drive, San Jose, California 95134. 12 3. On information and belief, Plaintiff and Counterclaim Defendant Cisco 13 Technology, Inc. ("CTI") is a California corporation with its principal place of business at 14 170 W. Tasman Drive, San Jose, California 95134. 15 **JURISDICTION** 16 4. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over Dexon's counterclaims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1367 and 1332. Dexon's counterclaims arise out of the same controversy as 17 plaintiffs" Federal claims, there is complete diversity of citizenship between Plaintiffs and 18 19 Dexon, and the amount in controversy exceeds seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000.00), exclusive of interest and costs. 20 21 **FACTS** 22 Cisco 23 5. Counterclaim Defendants (hereinafter referred to jointly as "Cisco") are the worldwide leader of networking for the Internet. Cisco offers products and related services 24 in the core technologies of routing and switching, along with more advanced technologies 25 in areas such as home networking, IP telephony, optical networking, security, storage area 26 networking, and wireless technology. On information and belief, Cisco contracts for the 27 28

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manufacture of a majority of its products overseas to keep costs of manufacture at a minimum.

6. On information and belief, Cisco has a stranglehold on the supply of networking products in the United States, with a dominant market share that has reached 70% or more.

### The Open Market

- As with any economic activity where there are significant profits, market forces have operated to create an open or "secondary" market for Cisco products. On information and belief, authentic or genuine Cisco products come to the open market in the United States in a variety of ways including: (a) Cisco's knowing sale of such products to open market suppliers in the context of either specific end user deals or when Cisco needs to move inventory; (b) Cisco's authorized resellers' purchase of product in excess of what they need for a specific end user order and subsequent resale of such product into the open market; (c) Cisco end user's resale of new, unused product; and (d) through importation of such product from abroad where it has been sold by distributors, resellers, or end users under similar circumstances. On information and belief, Cisco resists attempts by end users and resellers to return product, resulting in a natural supply of open market Cisco product.
- Given the substantial profits available from sale of Cisco-branded product, market forces dictate that a secondary market will develop for such products. These market forces benefit end users in that they reduce prices for such products.
- Dexon is an independent open-market reseller of computer networking products, including routers, switches and other computer hardware. Dexon provides new, refurbished and discontinued hardware products, including authentic or genuine products to its customers from leading manufacturers including, without limitation, Hewlett Packard, Dell, Juniper Networks and Cisco.
- 10. Dexon obtains Cisco products from reliable suppliers, subjects such products to extensive quality control, and then resells such products to other resellers and to end users, at a profit but frequently at prices lower than that offered by Cisco "Authorized" sellers.

consumers who purchase Cisco hardware with embedded software from a so-called

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- "Approved Source," defined as "Cisco or . . . [a] Cisco authorized reseller, distributor, or systems integrator[.]" Cisco warns that end users are "not licensed to Use the Software on secondhand or refurbished Cisco equipment not authorized by Cisco, or on Cisco equipment not purchased through an Approved Source."
- 16. In other words, although Cisco concedes that consumers can freely buy its hardware on the secondary market, Cisco prevents those same consumers from making any use of the hardware they have lawfully purchased on that market by prohibiting use of the embedded software. Cisco does this for anticompetitive ends: to stifle competition by destroying secondary market sales and increasing its own profits at the expense of consumers.
- 17. In an effort to dissuade consumers from purchasing secondary market goods, Cisco informs consumers that although its hardware can be freely resold, the "embedded Cisco software that runs on the hardware" is "not transferable," and purchasers of secondary market Cisco equipment "must acquire a new license from Cisco before the software can be used." The only way to avoid having to purchase a new license, Cisco says, is to buy refurbished equipment through Cisco's own program.
- 18. These representations to consumers are false. Even if it were possible for Cisco to sell hardware but license embedded software, the EULA would not be a permissible license of that software because it operates anticompetitively by not applying to products purchased in the secondary market.
- Accordingly, pursuant to the first sale doctrine, consumers who purchase Cisco hardware may use embedded software. They may also transfer the embedded software, along with the hardware, freely. Cisco may not sidestep the first sale doctrine by refusing to license software that it builds into hardware (to which the first sale doctrine indisputably applies) solely because consumers did not purchase the hardware through Cisco's more lucrative supply chain. And it may not deceive consumers by telling them that although they can buy secondary-market Cisco products, they will not be able to use those products without buying a license from Cisco.

- 20. Cisco's misrepresentations regarding consumers' right to buy and use secondary-market Cisco products successfully deter consumers from purchasing Cisco goods on the secondary market. Dexon has lost sales of products that would have been made but for Cisco's false representations to consumers regarding their ownership rights for Cisco hardware and embedded software purchased on the secondary market. These false representations have unjustly enriched Cisco at Dexon's expense.
- 21. Cisco has also improperly extorted license fees from consumers who are frightened into believing they will not be able to use the Cisco products they have lawfully purchased. On information and belief, when consumers who purchase Cisco goods on the secondary market attempt to register those goods with Cisco, Cisco falsely informs the consumers that their software licenses are invalid and that they cannot use their lawfully purchased hardware unless they pay additional license fees to Cisco. Cisco would not have obtained these license fees but for misrepresentations it makes to consumers regarding their ability to use Cisco embedded software.
- 22. On occasions where secondary market sellers obtain Cisco product directly from an "Authorized" seller, Cisco threatens that the end users rights are restricted because the sale was contrary to the "Authorized" seller's agreement with Cisco. Cisco's enforcement of this improper policy is selective. In addition to being contrary to well-established agency principles, on information and belief, such alleged agreements between Cisco and its "Authorized" sellers are often not properly renewed or maintained and are therefore not in force and effect.

### **SMARTnet Abuse**

23. In addition to its misrepresentations to consumers regarding whether they have a basic right to turn their products on, Cisco also attempts to leverage its exclusive control of essential software updates and services for Cisco products to functionally incapacitate select secondary market products. Cisco provides services and updates to its products via service agreements known as SMARTnet contracts. End users acquire these contracts in order to obtain those services.

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	24. Although end users are not legally required to purchase SMARTnet contracts for
	their Cisco products, they are effectively compelled to do so, because the services the
	contracts offer are integral to the products' functionality. Without SMARTnet contracts,
	end users will not receive important software bug fixes, patches, and updates (collectively
	"updates") that permit Cisco products to serve their intended functions. These updates are
	designed to repair malfunctions or defects in the software, or to combat security
	vulnerabilities. Consumers who do not update the software on their Cisco products are
	potentially exposed to security and operational risks. In addition, without the software
	updates, their Cisco products may not function properly.
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- 25. Because Cisco products run on proprietary operating system software that is essential for the products to function, these updates can be obtained only from Cisco. It is routine in the technology industry for manufacturers, such as Apple, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, and Microsoft, to make updates available to their consumers for free. Cisco, in contrast, provides updates only to consumers who have purchased SMARTnet contracts. Upon information and belief, Cisco does not routinely inform customers at the time of purchase of these stifling limitations.
- 26. Thus, many purchasers of Cisco switches learn after making a significant investment in Cisco products that they have become beholden to Cisco's demands if they wish to continue receiving updates.
- 27. Purchasers of Cisco products are locked into purchasing SMARTnet contracts for significant periods of time. For example, ethernet switches are durable, high fixed cost goods with extended longevity; consumers of these switches commonly intend to use them for many years. Transitioning from Cisco switches to switches made by another manufacturer is an expensive process, requiring the replacement of significant amounts of hardware and the retraining of personnel.
- 26 28. Cisco does not sell SMARTnet contracts directly to end users of Cisco products in 27 the first instance. Instead, Cisco sells SMARTnet contracts through its "Authorized 28 Channel Network." When end users purchase SMARTnet contracts from an Authorized

- Reseller, the contracts are linked to specific Cisco products. At this time, Cisco is supplied with the relevant product information, including the serial number, part number, and identity of the end user. Cisco then issues a SMARTnet contract in the name of the specific end user and Cisco product. Thus, when Cisco accepts payment for a SMARTnet contract, Cisco already has linked that contract to an identified Cisco product.
  - 29. Despite the fact that Cisco generates the SMARTnet contracts, pairs the contracts to genuine Cisco products identified by serial number and end user, and accepts payment with this information in hand, Cisco routinely selectively, after the fact, and without refunding payment, voids SMARTnet contracts paired with Cisco products because: i) the product was sold at some point on the secondary market; or ii) the SMARTnet contract was sold by an "Authorized" seller to a secondary market seller such as Dexon allegedly in violation of the "Authorized" seller's agreement with Cisco. Upon information and belief, Cisco does so in order to dissuade potential customers from entering into legal transactions to acquire genuine, lawfully obtained Cisco products from independent resellers like Dexon.
  - 30. Cisco has full knowledge that its "Authorized" sellers or partners sell an extremely large volume of SMARTnet contracts to secondary market sellers such as Dexon. In fact, Cisco's Technical Assistance Center has and will alter or change serial numbers in order to approve and thereby receive payment for SMARTnet contracts relating to secondary market equipment. Cisco turns a blind eye to such transactions because they are extremely profitable for Cisco.
  - 31. Cisco selectively chooses when to enforce its alleged restrictions on sales of SMARTnet contracts by "Authorized" sellers to secondary market sellers. In addition to being contrary to well-established agency principles, on information and belief, such alleged agreements between Cisco and its "Authorized" sellers are often not properly renewed or maintained and are therefore not in force and effect.
- 27 | 32. Dexon has routinely and frequently purchased SMARTnet contracts from
  28 | "Authorized" sellers to pair with Cisco products sold to its customers.

1	33. Cisco's practice of selectively voiding SMARTnet contracts for Cisco products
2	traded in the secondary market often results in Cisco voiding SMARTnet contracts –
3	including contracts having the majority of their life remaining – while retaining and
4	refusing to provide a refund for the payment covering such SMARTnet contracts. In
5	addition to unjustly enriching Cisco at the expense of secondary market sellers like Dexon
6	and end consumers, such practice is contrary to Cisco's agreement with its "Authorized"
7	sellers which calls for a refund under such circumstances. Cisco has and will void or
8	cancel SMARTnet contracts which have been fully paid for without advising the end user.
9	On at least one occasion, Cisco voided the SMARTnet contract governing and protecting a
10	911 emergency call center's critical network equipment without advising the 911 call
11	center their network equipment was no longer protected/covered.
12	34. Due to the robust secondary market, Cisco routinely and intentionally sells multiple
13	SMARTnet contracts on the same product covering the same time period. For example, it
14	is not uncommon for a consumer to purchase a Cisco product as well as a SMARTnet
15	contract covering such product. If the consumer ends up not using such product, such
16	product may be sold – unopened in a sealed box - on the secondary market. The customer
17	receives no refund on the SMARTnet contract and may in fact, due to poor record keeping,
18	mistakenly renew its SMARTnet contract for such product it no longer owns.
19	35. It is common for secondary market sellers such as Dexon to purchase a duplicate

35. It is common for secondary market sellers such as Dexon to purchase a duplicate SMARTnet contract covering the exact same product for its customers. Despite having records pairing the product's serial number to each SMARTnet contract, Cisco knowingly accepts payment and fails to provide any refund on such redundant SMARTnet contracts.

### **Misclassification of Cisco Products**

36. As part of Cisco's anticompetitive interference in the secondary market, Cisco also selectively classifies genuine, lawfully obtained Cisco products as "used," "stolen," "counterfeit," "black market," "a security risk," "malware," "scrapped," or "inactive" simply because these products were traded on the secondary market. As a result, end users

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or resellers who communicate with Cisco ab	out the status of certain Cisco products are
deliberately provided with misinformation.	

- 37. Cisco's contortion of the term "used" is particularly egregious. Rather than give the term its ordinary meaning, Cisco has unilaterally decided that "used equipment" means "previously owned equipment that is now owned by a party other than the original customer," including both "opened and unopened equipment." Cisco even instructs its employees to tell consumers that "unopened boxes do[] not necessarily mean [that equipment is] 'new."
- 38. Accordingly, Cisco routinely publicly criticizes and labels secondary market product which has never been used – including product contained in unopened sealed boxes – as "used" contrary to consumers well understood meaning of such term.
- 39. Cisco knows that its unilateral definition of the term "used" is contrary to the common consumer understanding, and that consumers are misled by its use of the term. Indeed, Cisco deploys its false definition of the term "used" in order to deceive consumers as to the nature of products they purchase on the secondary market. Cisco does so in an effort to stifle competition and extract additional profits from consumers who would, but for Cisco's misrepresentations and misuse of the term "used," purchase products on the secondary market.

# Wrongful Denial of Warranty Coverage

- 40. Cisco has also wrongfully denied warranty coverage of genuine Cisco products solely as a result of the fact that those products were sold in the secondary market. Cisco states as a general policy that products sold on the secondary market are ineligible for Cisco warranties. Cisco's ostensible justification for this refusal is that Cisco is unsure whether products sold on the secondary market are genuine. But this is a farce: Cisco is well-aware that genuine Cisco products are commonly sold on the secondary market.
- 41. Cisco has at various times asserted that these anticompetitive strictures are necessary in order to mitigate the risk of counterfeit goods being sold to unwitting customers or receiving Cisco services. These justifications are pretextual and designed to

	obscure the fact Cisco seeks to minimize competition and exact more control over the
2	market for Cisco products, to the detriment of the consuming public.
3	42. Secondary market resellers of Cisco products, including Dexon, are highly
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- incentivized to detect and stamp out the sale of counterfeit goods. While a manufacturer such as Cisco may blame rogue actors when a dissatisfied customer confronts it with a counterfeit product, an independent reseller's own reputation suffers significantly when it sells a customer a counterfeit goods. Unsurprisingly, most independent resellers, including Dexon, take proactive steps to detect and prevent the sale of counterfeit product.
- "Authorized Reseller" status is not foolproof protection against counterfeit products. Cisco's "Authorized" sellers are likewise victimized by the presence of counterfeit product in the marketplace and have been caught selling counterfeit Cisco product.
- 44. Cisco has contributed to and caused the presence of counterfeit product in the stream of commerce by: i) claiming to have developed "tools" capable of detecting counterfeit goods yet, unlike their competitors in the market, intentionally failing or refusing to provide or offer such "tools" to secondary market resellers such as Dexon to aid and assist their efforts to detect and deter counterfeit products; ii) failing to properly police and control their manufacturers; and iii) failing to properly manage their product serial numbers. As one example, Plaintiffs' Technical Assistance Center will intentionally modify or change product serial numbers in order to ensure secondary market products qualify for, and Plaintiffs' receive compensation for, SMARTnet.
- Cisco's anticompetitive behavior as alleged herein has attracted the attention of government regulators and interested parties worldwide. Upon information and belief, Cisco has sought to avoid a wholesale dismantling of its anticompetitive practices by incrementally providing relief when compelled to do so. For example, in 2014, when Cisco was under investigation by the Swiss Competition Commission related to Cisco's failure to provide updates and other anticompetitive behavior, Cisco was compelled to make a commitment that updates could be obtained within Switzerland and the European Union

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without having to purchase SMARTnet contracts. Cisco also had to implement a series of remedial measures to inform consumers of these policies. In the United States, however, Cisco continues to pursue the anticompetitive practices alleged herein.

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# Cisco's Tortious Efforts to Interfere with Dexon's Business

Because Cisco regards open market resellers like Dexon as a threat to its excess

6 7 profits, Cisco spends substantial money and effort to attack open market participants such as Dexon and to chill reseller and end user participation in the open market. These steps include but are not limited to:

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a. Prompting federal investigation of the open market on specious grounds that the open market presents a threat to the national security of the United States.

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b. Employing a team of "Brand Protection" employees whose primary responsibility is to intervene with resellers and end users in cases where they are either contemplating the purchase of product, or have ordered product, from the open market. Brand Protection personnel use a variety of tools to disrupt open market sales, including: (i) advising resellers and end users that product from the open market is suspect, may damage or jeopardize their network operations, may void Cisco warranties, may be counterfeit, and is otherwise unreliable; and (ii) spreading false rumors about open market resellers and their owners.

c. Instructing its account managers, assigned to specific end users: (i) to

convince end users to specify in RFPs the acquisition of Cisco equipment

through "authorized" resellers only (even if the result is materially higher

pricing); (ii) to advise resellers and end users of the same issues raised by

Brand Protection and, if necessary, invite Brand Protection into the

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discussion.

640.002\9980 -30- Case No. 3:20-CV-4926-CRB DEFENDANT'S ANSWER, AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES, COUNTERCLAIMS AND THIRD- PARTY CLAIMS

"unauthorized" or "unapproved" because sold outside of Cisco's authorized channels, sold

2202, that the sale of genuine Cisco product which Cisco has unilaterally deemed to be

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- to a secondary market reseller such as Dexon, or ineligible for warranty services as a result thereof, do not violate the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1114, 1125.
  - 53. Contrary to Cisco's assertions, the first sale doctrine does not permit a trademark holder to transform non-infringing goods into infringing goods simply by fiat. The sale of genuine goods whose warranty eligibility has been unilaterally revoked by Cisco does not violate the Lanham Act.
  - 54. A real and actual controversy presently exists between the parties to this action which is concrete and justiciable in character, and as to which each party possesses an interest in resolving.
  - 55. Counterclaimant sells, and intends to continue selling, genuine Cisco products which Cisco asserts are ineligible for warranty services once they come into Counterclaimant's possession in the ordinary course of commerce. Unless and until Counterclaimant's sales of genuine Cisco products are deemed to be permissible under United States law, Counterclaimant's ability to sell such products will be wrongfully and unnecessarily impaired, and Counterclaimant will continue to be injured and damaged by this threat. Accordingly, Counterclaimant seeks declaratory relief from this Court.
  - 56. The controversy between Counterclaimant and Cisco warrants relief declaring the rights of the parties pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 & 2202, and finding that the sale of genuine Cisco products whose warranty eligibility has been unilaterally revoked by Cisco after entering the stream of commerce does not violate the Lanham Act.

# SECOND COUNTERCLAIM Declaratory Judgment (28 U.S.C. §§ 2201-2202)

- 57. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
- 25 58. Pursuant to the Federal Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201, et seq.,
- 26 Counterclaimant is entitled to judgment from this Court that Counterclaimants' refusal to27 warrant genuine Cisco products acquired outside of Cisco's "Authorized Reseller

Network" violates New York General Business Law § 369-b and is unenforceable in New 1 2 York. 3 59. A real and actual controversy presently exists between the parties to this action which is concrete and justiciable in character, and as to which each party possesses an 4 interest in resolving. 5 60. Counterclaimant sells, and intends to continue selling, genuine Cisco products in 6 New York which Cisco asserts are ineligible for warranty services once they come into 7 8 Counterclaimant's possession in the ordinary course of commerce. Cisco's claims harm 9 Counterclaimant's ability to sell these products in New York due to wrongfully 10 representing to customers that products sold by Counterclaimant are not eligible for 11 warranties. Accordingly, Counterclaimant seeks declaratory relief from this Court. 12 61. The controversy between Counterclaimant and Cisco warrants relief declaring the 13 rights of the parties pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 & 2202, and finding that Cisco's refusal 14 to warrant genuine products sold in New York based on their purchase or sale in the 15 secondary market violates New York General Business Law § 369-b. THIRD COUNTERCLAIM 16 **Unfair Competition Law** 17 (CAL. BUS. & PROF. CODE §§ 17200 et seq.) Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding 18 62. paragraphs as if fully set forth herein. 19 63. California Business and Professions Code §§ 17200 et seq. prohibit acts of unfair 20 competition, which includes any unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent business act or practice. 21 As detailed above, Cisco has taken numerous anticompetitive steps designed to 22 23 afford it a greater level of control over the purchase and sale of Cisco-branded products than the law permits. These anticompetitive actions are tantamount to violations of the 24 antitrust laws. 25 65. Cisco has engaged in these unfair and wrongful actions in order to hinder the ability 26 27 of those in the secondary market to compete with Cisco. These practices harm both

independent resellers like Dexon, whose ability to compete is impeded, and customers,

- who are forced to pay increased costs for genuine Cisco products as a result of this artificially deflated competition. Cisco's acts, which destroy competition for its products at the expense of consumers, are tantamount to violations of the antitrust laws. As a result of Cisco's unfair, fraudulent, and unlawful conduct, Dexon has lost sales of Cisco products they otherwise would have made, and have accordingly lost money or property as a result of Cisco's practices.

  66. Cisco's actions have caused, and unless restrained by this Court, will continue to cause irreparable injury to Dexon
- 8 cause irreparable injury to Dexon.
  9 67. Dexon seeks the full restitution by Cisco that is necessary and according to proof to
- restore any and all property and monies, including interest, acquired by Cisco, and all costs
  caused to Dexon as a result of Cisco's unlawful and unfair business practices.
- 12 68. Dexon's claims, including their claims under California Business & Professions
- 13 Code § 17200, are brought to enforce an important right affecting the public interest.
- 14 Accordingly, Dexon is entitled to recover its attorneys' fees from Cisco. CAL. CIV.
- **15** PROC. CODE § 1021.5.

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# FOURTH COUNTERCLAIM Lanham Act False Advertising (15 U.S.C. § 1125(a)(1)(B))

- 69. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
- 70. Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a), provides that it is unlawful for any person to use a "false or misleading description of fact, or false or misleading representation of fact, which . . . in commercial advertising or promotion, misrepresents the nature, characteristics, qualities, or geographic origin of his or her or another person's goods, services, or commercial activities."
  - 71. As set forth above, Cisco has published in commercial advertising and promotion, and continues to publish in commercial advertising and promotion, false or misleading representations of fact regarding the software embedded in Cisco hardware sold on the secondary market.

- In addition, Cisco has published in commercial advertising and promotion, and 72. 1 continues to publish in commercial advertising and promotion, false or misleading 2 3 representations of fact regarding whether products in the secondary market are "used." The foregoing false and misleading representations of fact are designed to mislead 73. 4 5 consumers, and do in fact mislead consumers, at the expense of Dexon, causing direct and substantial loss to Dexon of money and market share. 6 7 74. The foregoing false and misleading representations of fact are made willfully and 8 entitle Dexon to recover the profits obtained by Cisco thereby, in addition to Dexon's own damages suffered as a result of Cisco's false and misleading representations of fact. 9 Cisco's misrepresentations have caused, and unless restrained by this Court, will 10 75. 11 continue to cause irreparable injury to Dexon. 12 <u>FIFTH COUNTERCLAIM</u> Intentional Interference with Contractual Relations 13 Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding 76. 14 paragraphs as if fully set forth herein. 15 77. 16

  - Dexon secured contracts with certain customers for the sale of Cisco products on which Dexon would have earned significant profits.
  - 78. On information and belief, Cisco knew or should have known of these contractual relationships between Dexon and these third party customers.
  - 79. On information and belief, Cisco intentionally, or with reckless disregard for the truth, made false and misleading statements about Dexon and the products it sells to these customers in order to disrupt the contractual relationship and to cause these customers to purchase product from Cisco authorized resellers at a higher price.
  - Cisco's statements in fact disrupted these contractual relationships between Dexon 80. and its customers.
  - Dexon has suffered substantial economic damage as a result of this wrongful 81. conduct in an amount subject to proof at trial.

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82. Cisco's conduct, as outlined above, demonstrates that Cisco acted fraudulently, oppressively, and with malice within the meaning of Cal. Civ. Code § 3294, entitling Dexon to punitive or exemplary damages in an amount sufficient to punish Cisco and to make an example of it to the community such that Cisco will not engage in such conduct in the future.

### **SIXTH COUNTERCLAIM**

# **Intentional Interference with Prospective Economic Advantage**

- 83. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
- 84. An economic relationship existed between Dexon and its actual and prospective customers, each of which contained the probability of substantial future economic benefits to Dexon.
- 85. On information and belief, Cisco knew or should have known of these relationships.
- 86. On information and belief, Cisco intentionally, or with reckless disregard, engaged in tortious conduct designed to disrupt Dexon's potential benefit from these relationships, including:
  - a. By intentionally misrepresenting, or representing with reckless disregard for the truth, to Dexon's customers, among other things, that the Cisco products Dexon sold were not new, used, counterfeit, suspect, non-genuine, and/or unauthorized; and
  - b. By intentionally misrepresenting, or representing with reckless disregard for the truth, to Dexon's customers, among other things, that if they purchased product from open market resellers such as Dexon, they would jeopardize the security of their data networks.
  - c. By intentionally misrepresenting, or representing with reckless disregard for the truth, to Dexon's customers, among other things, that Dexon somehow improperly modified Cisco product, including, without limitation, by "repackaging" such products and/or substituting or replacing parts/software on such product.

87. 1 Cisco's statements were made with the intent to disrupt the economic relationship 2 between Dexon and its potential and actual customers in order to put Dexon out of 3 business and to ensure that these customers would purchase Cisco product at higher prices from "Cisco Authorized Resellers" under Cisco's control. 4 5 88. As a result of the efforts detailed above, Dexon's relationships with its potential and actual customers have in fact been permanently disrupted and/or materially damaged in a 6 significant number of instances, including its future relationships. As a result of Cisco's 7 8 tortious efforts, Dexon's customers have refused to pay for certain Cisco goods, have returned and/or cancelled orders for such goods, have removed Dexon's bids from 9 contention for business, and have ceased doing business with Dexon on other products 10 and/or all together. 11 Dexon has suffered substantial economic damage as a result of this wrongful 12 89. 13 conduct in an amount subject to proof at trial. 14 90. Cisco's conduct, as outlined above, demonstrates that Cisco acted fraudulently, oppressively, and with malice within the meaning of Cal. Civ. Code § 3294, entitling 15 Dexon to punitive or exemplary damages in an amount sufficient to punish Cisco and to 16 17 make an example of it to the community such that Cisco will not engage in such conduct in the future. 18 SEVENTH COUNTERCLAIM Trade Libel 19

91. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

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- 92. On information and belief, Dexon alleges that Cisco has repeatedly made disparaging statements about Dexon's products as detailed herein.
- 93. Cisco's statements disparaged Dexon's products. On information and belief, Dexon 25 alleges that the claims made were false or materially misleading.
  - Dexon has suffered and will continue to suffer irreparable harm should Cisco's 94. trade libel be allowed to continue.

1	95. As a proximate result of Cisco's statements, prospective and actual customers have
2	been deterred from buying Dexon's products and from otherwise dealing with Dexon.
3	Dexon has suffered substantial economic damage as a result of this wrongful conduct in an
4	amount subject to proof at trial.
5	96. Cisco's conduct, as outlined above, demonstrates that Cisco acted fraudulently,
6	oppressively, and with malice within the meaning of Cal. Civ. Code § 3294, entitling
7	Dexon to punitive or exemplary damages in an amount sufficient to punish Cisco and to
8	make an example of it to the community such that Cisco will not engage in such conduct in
9	the future.
10	97. Dexon will suffer irreparable harm to its goodwill if this trade libel continues.
11	Dexon is entitled to injunctive relief to preclude Cisco's trade libel.
12	EIGHTH COUNTERCLAIM  H. G. L. R. L.
13	Unfair Competition Under Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200 et seq.
14	98. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding
15	paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
16	99. Cisco's conduct, as set forth above, is unlawful, unfair, and fraudulent as well as
17	untrue and deceptive within the meaning of Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200 et seq.
18	100. Dexon will continue to suffer irreparable harm to its goodwill if this unfair
19	competition continues. Dexon is entitled to injunctive relief to preclude Cisco's unfair
20	competition.
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### THIRD PARTY CLAIMS

3 Third Party Plaintiff Dexon Computer, Inc. asserts the following claims against Third Party Defendants Atlantix Global Systems International, LLC, Bizcom Electronics, Inc., 4 5 Digi Devices Online, Enterprise Business Technologies, Inc., Fiber Cable Connections, MJSI, Multimode Technologies, LLC, Network Republic, Optimum Data, Inc., Paragon, 6 Pure Future Technology, Inc., Seastar IT Trading LLC, Server Tech Supply, Softnetworks, 7 8 Inc., Strada Networks, LLC, Strategic Telecom Supply & Solutions, Unlimited Network

9 Solutions and Wisecom Technologies alleges as follows:

# **THE PARTIES**

- 11 101. Third Party Plaintiff Dexon Computer, Inc. ("Dexon") is a Minnesota corporation 12 with its principal place of business at 9201 E. Bloomington Freeway, Suite BB,
- 13 Bloomington, Minnesota 55420.
- 14 On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Atlantix Global Systems 102.
- International, LLC is a Georgia limited liability corporation with its principal place of 15
- business in Georgia. 16
- 17 On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Bizcom Electronics, Inc., is a 103.
- 18 California corporation with its principal place of business in California.
- 19 On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Digi Devices Online is a foreign 104.
- corporation with its principal U.S. place of business in Texas. 20
- On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Enterprise Business 21 105.
- Technologies, Inc. is a New York corporation with its principal place of business in New 22
- 23 York.
- On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Fiber Cable Connections is a 24 106.
- 25 Washington corporation with its principal place of business in Washington.
- On information and belief, Third Party Defendant MJSI is a California corporation 26 107.
- 27 with its principal place of business in California.

- 1 108. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Multimode Technologies, LLC is
- 2 | a Minnesota limited liability company with its principal place of business in Minnesota.
- 3 | 109. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Network Republic is a Texas
- 4 || corporation with its principal place of business in Texas.
- 5 | 110. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Opitmum Data, Inc. is a
- 6 Nebraska corporation with its principal place of business in Nebraska.
- 7 | 111. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Paragon is a Massachusetts
- 8 corporation with its principal place of business in Massachusetts.
- 9 | 112. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Pure Future Technology, Inc. is a
- 10 California corporation with its principal place of business in California.
- 11 | 113. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Seastar IT Trading LLC is a
- 12 Washington limited liability company with its principal place of business in Washington.
- 13 | 114. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Server Tech Supply is a Virginia
- 14 corporation with its principal place of business in Pennsylvania.
- 15 | 115. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Softnetworks, Inc. is a New
- 16 | Jersey limited liability company with its principal place of business in New Jersey.
- 17 | 116. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Strada Networks, LLC is a
- 18 foreign limited liability company with its principal place of business in British Columbia,
- **19** | Canada.
- 20 | 117. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Strategic Telecom Supply &
- 21 | Solutions is a Virginia limited liability company with its principal place of business in
- **22** || Virginia.
- 23 | 118. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Teksavers is a Texas corporation
- 24 with its principal place of business in Texas
- 25 | 119. On information and belief, Third Party Defendant Unlimited Network Solutions is a
- 26 corporation with its principal place of business in California.
- 27 | 120. On information and belief, Wisecom Technologies is a corporation with its
- **28** principal place of business in Maryland.

1	Supply of Alleged Counterfeit and Infringing Product	
2	121. The Third Party Defendants are all reputable dealers and merchants with respect to	
3	the Cisco products alleged to be counterfeit and thereby infringing herein ("allegedly	
4	infringing Cisco product").	
5	122. Dexon obtained such allegedly infringing Cisco product from the Third Party	
6	Defendants. While Dexon denies Cisco's allegations and believes the subject products to	
7	be genuine, Dexon relied in good faith on the Third Party Defendants in procuring or	
8	obtaining such products.	
9	123. Without limitation, the Third Party Defendants warranted that such products sold to	
10	Dexon would be "delivered free of the rightful claim of any third person by way of	
11	infringement or the like." See U.C.C. §2-312(3).	
12		
13	(Indemnification - All Third Party Defendants)	
14	124. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding	
15	paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.	
16	125. Dexon was named in this litigation as a direct result of product procured from	
17	and/or supplied by the Third Party Defendants.	
18	126. Third Party Defendants should be ordered to indemnify Dexon whether based on	
19	express agreement, implied agreement or common law.	
20	SECOND THIRD PARTY CLAIM	
21	(Contribution - All Third Party Defendants)	
22	127. Dexon repeats and realleges each of the allegations set forth in the preceding	
23	paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.	
24	128. Dexon was named in this litigation as a direct result of product procured from and	
25	supplied by the Third Party Defendants.	
26	129. Dexon is entitled to contribution from Third Party Defendants, whether based on	
27	express agreement, implied agreement or common law, to pay or defray any judgment	
28	entered against Dexon herein.	

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PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Defendant, Counterclaim Plaintiff and Third Party Plaintiff Dexon Computer, Inc. prays for judgment and relief against Plaintiffs and Counterclaim Defendants Cisco Systems, Inc. and Cisco Technology, Inc. ("Cisco") and Third Party Defendants Atlantix Global Systems International, LLC, Bizcom Electronics, Inc., Digi Devices Online, Enterprise Business Technologies, Inc., Fiber Cable Connections, MJSI, Multimode Technologies, LLC, Network Republic, Optimum Data, Inc., Paragon, Pure Future Technology, Inc., Seastar IT Trading LLC, Server Tech Supply, Softnetworks, Inc., Strada Networks, LLC, Strategic Telecom Supply & Solutions, Unlimited Network Solutions and Wisecom Technologies as follows:

- a. Dismissing Plaintiffs' Cisco Systems, Inc. and Cisco Technology, Inc. claims with prejudice, together with costs and disbursements;
- b. Awarding Defendant Dexon Computer, Inc. its attorneys' fees incurred in defending against such claims;
- c. Declaring that Dexon's sale of genuine Cisco goods which Cisco has unilaterally deemed to be "unauthorized" or "unapproved" because sold outside of Cisco's authorized channels, sold to a secondary market reseller such as Dexon, or ineligible for warranty services as a result thereof, does not violate the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1114, 1125(a);
- d. Declaring that Cisco's refusal to warrant genuine products sold in New York violates New York General Business Law § 369-b;
- e. Awarding Dexon restitutionary disgorgement;
- f. Awarding Dexon actual damages, subject to proof at trial but in an amount in excess of \$75,000.;
- g. An award of punitive damages in an amount sufficient to punish Counterclaim Defendants, to make an example of them to the community, and to deter them from such conduct as to Dexon or others in the future;

1	h.	For equitable remedial efforts by Counterclaim Defendants sufficient to rehabilitate			
2		Dexon's damaged reputation;			
3	i.	For orders restraining Cisco Systems, Inc. from engaging in similar conduct in the			
4		future;			
5	j.	Awarding Dexon damages, lost profits, and treble damages pursuant to the Lanham			
6		Act;			
7	k.	Awarding Dexon its costs and expenses of litigation, including reasonable attorneys'			
8		fees;			
9	1.	Enjoining Cisco from further violations of the laws enumerated herein;			
10	m.	. An award in Dexon's favor against Third Party Defendants sufficient to compensate			
11		Dexon for all economic loss, damages, attorney's fees and costs resulting from the			
12		claims herein; and			
13	n.	n. Such other and further relief as this Court deems just and equitable.			
14					
15	Dated	: June 17, 2021		anda R. Washton, member of	
16		CONKLE, KREMER & ENGEL Professional Law Corporation			
17					
18			By:	/s/ Amanda R. Washton	
19				Amanda R. Washton Attorneys for Defendant, Counterclaimant,	
20				Plaintiff and Third Party Plaintiff Dexon	
21				Computer, Inc.	
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**DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL** Dexon Computer, Inc. demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable. Dated: June 17, 2021 Amanda R. Washton, member of CONKLE, KREMER & ENGEL Professional Law Corporation By: /s/ Amanda R. Washton Amanda R. Washton Attorneys for Defendant, Counterclaimant, Plaintiff and Third Party Plaintiff Dexon Computer, Inc.